

## CHAPTER - 28

# LABOUR MOVEMENT

1. The earliest labour leaders were Sasipada Banerjee of Bengal, S.S. Bengalee of Mumbai and N.M. Lokhanday of Mumbai.
  2. First labour organization was Working Men's Club founded in 1870 by Sasipada Banerjee at Kolkata. Sasipada Banerjee published the journal Bharat Sramjeevi.
  3. N.M. Lokhanday could be regarded as the first leader of the Indian workers. In 1890 he founded Mumbai Millhands Association and protested against the poor conditions in the factories. He published the journal Dinbandhu.
  4. Other important workers organization were the Kamgar Hitavardhak Sabha (1909), the Social Service League (1911), Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India (1897), Printers Union of Kolkata (1905) Postal Union in Mumbai.
  5. The Chennai Labour Union, founded in 1918 by B.P. Wadia was perhaps the first trade union organization of Indian on modern lines.
  6. On Oct. 31, 1920 All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), which was influenced by the Social Democratic ideas of British labour party. It was also influenced by moderates like N.M. Joshi.
  7. The first session of AITUC was held in Mumbai. Lala Lajpat Rai was the President & Dewam Cham Lal was the Secretary.
  8. First session was attended by C.R. Das, V.V. Giri, J.L. Nehru, S.C. Bose, Sarojini Naidu, Satyamurti and C.F. Andrew.
  9. Gandhi founded Ahmedabad Textile Labour Association also known as Majdur Mahajan in 1918-20.
  10. A Giri Kamgar Mahamandal was founded by A.A. Alve and G.R. Kasle in Mumbai. This emerged as Girni Kamgar Union in 1928 under the communists.
  11. Split took place in AITUC in 1929 session which was presided over by J.L. Nehru over the issue of affiliation and issue of boycott of royal commission on labour.
  12. In 1929 AITUC was divided into two groups.
    - The Reformers called Geneva Amsterdam Group, which wanted affiliation with the International Federation of Trade Unions.
    - The Revolutionary or Moscovite Group which wanted affiliation with Red Labour Union (RITU).
    - AITUC was affiliated to pan-pacific secretariate and to the Third International.
  13. In protest N.M. Joshi withdrew and formed All India Trade Union Federation in 1929. V.V. Giri was its first president.
  14. Second split took place in 1931 and Red Trade Union Congress was founded.
  15. In 1933, N.M. Joshi & R.R. Bakhle founded National Trade Union Federation.
  16. Unity was restored in AITUC in 1940.
  17. A pro-government Union was founded Indian Federation of Labour.
  18. Indian National Trade Union Congress was founded in 1944 by Nationalist leaders led by Sardar Vallabhabhai Patel.
- Labour Laws Passed During the British Period**
- First Factory Act, 1881**
- Commission for this purpose was constituted in 1874.
  - Prohibition of Child Labour below 7 yrs.
  - Fencing of dangerous machinery.
  - Working hours fixed for child below 12 yrs.
- Second Factory Act, 1891**
- Commission for this purpose constituted in 1884.
  - Prohibition of child labour below 9 yrs.
  - Working hours fixed for Child below 14 yrs.
  - Recess of 11/2 yrs.

- Weekly holiday for women labour.

Factories Act of 1909 & 1911.

- Same laws were enacted for Jute Industries.

Indentured Labour was Abolished in 1922

- It began in 1930

Indian Trade Union Act, 1923

- Legal status was given to union.
- Rights of registered union was recognised.

Trade Dispute Act, 1929

- Special courts were constituted for settling dispute.
- Strike was made illegal in public utility services.

Act of 1935

- Labour constituencies were recognized.
- Provision for election of labour representatives.

National Service Ordinance, 1940

- Duty to work was recognized.
- Protection was given to rights of workers.

Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance, 1941

- Prohibited employers from dismissing workers without valid reasons.

Labour Conspiracy Cases During the British Period

7. Peshwar conspiracy, 1922-23.

8. Kanpur conspiracy, 1924.

- Dange, Usmani, Nalini Gupta, M. Ahmed were involved.

9. Meerut conspiracy, 1929.

- 32 Communists including 3 British Philip Sparts, Ben Bradely, Lester Hutchinson were involved.
- Dange, Muzaffar Ahmed, Jogelkar, Usmani etc. were involved.

10. Kanpur workers strike, 1937 onwards

- Kanpur Labour Enquiry Committee under R. Prasad was constituted.